



JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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Johnson's Letters

For many of us the most exciting recent event is the appearance of R.W. Chapman's three-volume edition of Johnson's letters. Long anticipated, it is a work of major importance for 18th-century scholars. But since the volumes are being extensively reviewed on both sides of the Atlantic — with a front page spread in the *New York Times* Book Review Section by Delancey Ferguson and a warm appreciation by Joseph Wood Krutch in the *Herald-Tribune* — there is no need for a formal discussion in our pages. Instead, we would like to concentrate on only a few special points.

In many ways Chapman's greatest contribution has to do with textual accuracy. To say this is not to minimize the value of the many letters which are here collected for the first time. (Actually Chapman has almost 500 more than G.B. Hill). The new letters are valuable, but even more important to scholars is the authenticity of the texts. For the most part, Hill depended on printed sources, since few of the originals were then available, and he probably did not realize how corrupt in places his versions were. But the twentieth century is more skeptical about earlier editorial practices, and Chapman was determined to find the surviving manuscripts. He has been at it for over thirty years, assiduously following the trail, himself or by proxy, to the far corners of the world. Some letters still have eluded him, but not many. We may be certain that we now have what Johnson wrote.

Is the care and trouble justified? We would say yes, emphatically. Take one example. In a letter to Frances Reynolds of April 8, '1782, which it is now apparent referred to her Essay on Taste, Johnson wrote about "the Ideas of Beauty." G.B. Hill, printing from Croker, had instead "the plans of Burnaby," thus

completely obscuring the meaning of the letter, and sending scholars off on a vain search for a fictitious "Burnaby." Other examples could be cited where Johnson's difficult handwriting misled earlier transcribers. Happily for us, through long practice Chapman has acquired the gift of divination.

Some readers are certain to complain about the complexity of the technical apparatus, but we refuse to sympathize with such "softies." Chapman's awe-inspiring series of appendixes and indexes should be taken as a challenge. In them there is a wealth of information for the strong man to dig out. Once mastered, they will be a veritable gold mine for all 18th-century scholars. For example, in Appendix F will be found the best short description of postal practices in the 18th-century, very useful for anyone involved in the editing of manuscript letters, or for anyone using post-marks as evidence of dating. The other appendixes are packed with facts about Boswell, the Thrales, Dr. Taylor, and others of the Doctor's friends.

There are seven separate indexes: of autobiographical elements in the letters, of persons, authors, places, subjects, Johnson's own works, and even of his use of words. And they are not merely compilations of page numbers. The complete riches of these pages, indeed, we have ourselves only begun to fathom.

One last warning to unwary readers. Late additions of material -- new letters, corrections and further explanations -- are dispersed at various places throughout the three volumes. For instance, newly discovered letters, impossible to place chronologically, will be found in at least five places. Nor are lists of errata and addenda all in one spot. But you will soon learn where to look, and Chapman's richly-packed volumes will become one of our most valuable Johnsonian reference works.

We are indebted to Mary E. Knapp (Western College) for a last comment. Look at the "running head" on page 451 of Volume III. By a happy juxtaposition the printer has made a delightful gesture of international good will.

Sir John Hawkins

Of all Johnson's close associates the "unclubbable" Sir John Hawkins is the least attractive personally. Except for his own daughter Laetitia he has rarely had a defender, and there has never been an adequate biography. Percy Scholes, the eminent

musical authority, has now decided it is time to fill this void, and his *Life and Activities of Sir John Hawkins: Musician, Magistrate and Friend of Johnson* has been published by the Oxford Univ. Press.

As might have been expected, Scholes's book is filled with entertaining anecdotes. He can never resist a good story even when it involves a digression. And perhaps for such an unsympathetic subject, and for a man who left so little autobiographical evidence, this is the best approach. It gives us the important details and makes an entertaining book, if not a very revealing one.

While Scholes tries hard to be scrupulously fair, it is easy to see that his heart still belongs to Burney. Not that he takes sides in the famous quarrel, but some readers may think that he fails to make the most of the merits of Hawkins' work -- the antiquarian researches, the stress on early English music. And in discussing the *Life of Johnson*, Scholes apparently sees no need to question the traditional verdict. Yet a case can be made for the factual importance of Hawkins' work, especially for Johnson's early career. In a number of instances, as the indefatigable A.L. Reade has pointed out, there is independent evidence to support Hawkins. The character of "Tetty" is a case in point. The more one studies all the available facts, the more credible becomes Hawkins' rather unflattering description of her later years.

Scholes's biography, which gathers together so many of the facts of Hawkins' life, will be very useful, and perhaps where so much is given we should not complain too seriously about what is not attempted.

Johnson and Boswell Notes

There is scarcely any need to point out the immense value of A.L. Reade's consolidated index of persons who are referred to in his ten volumes of *Johnsonian Gleanings* and the Johnsonian portions of *The Reades of Blackwood Hill*. This index of 518 pages, produced by photographic process from typed pages, is a vast storehouse of geneological and biographical information. Only those who are familiar with the extent of Reade's knowledge and with his scholarly approach will be able to guess at the labor which has gone into the making of this invaluable work of reference. Privately printed, it may be secured from the author (Treleaven House,

Blundellsands, Liverpool, England).

R.W. Chapman has collected in *Johnsonian and Other Essays and Reviews* (Clarendon) many of his anonymous contributions to the *TLS* and other periodicals. We recommend it heartily for your bedside table--a delightful book to dip into. His trenchant style is always stimulating.

We have hitherto not commented on Bertrand Bronson's volume of selections from Johnson's works in the inexpensive Rinehart series. It is certainly a useful school text, though we still lament the practical necessity of leaving out *Rasselas*. Since no two Johnsonians would ever agree on what should or should not go into such a selection, however, it is obviously futile to argue here. Bronson's short Introduction sets just the right tone and the contents give a varied sampling from Johnson's mature work.

Frank Taylor's valuable article in the Sept. 1952 *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, mentioned in our last on page 5, is now available in an offprint (price 3 shillings).

H. Clifford Smith sends word of the acquisition by the Gough Square Johnson House of two valuable gifts: a copy of Cowley's works which was once in Johnson's library; and a letter from Johnson to Mrs. Thrale (Chapman, No. 311.1).

We wish to acknowledge receipt from Robert Orlovich (Iowa State) of a large list of Johnsonian items which do not appear in our recent *Johnsonian Studies*. Many in the list were purposely omitted, but we gladly welcome others which we had missed. Since we hope someday to issue a supplement, we are very happy to have contributions for it. What we principally want are out-of-the-way discussions in books and articles not obviously related to Johnson. These are the hardest of all to find. We might add that older *Notes and Queries* and *TLS* items, which on the surface may apparently have been missed, have usually been omitted because they added nothing of importance.

In our last number we mentioned an article by D.F. Rowan in the *Book-Collector* concerned with a Dublin edition of the *Lives of the Poets*. Fritz Liebert (Yale) has written a reply, which should appear in an early issue of the magazine, showing how much more complicated the matter is than Rowan supposed. Indeed, Liebert has identified five different title-pages for Dublin-printed editions.

We hear that James Sutherland in his inaugural lecture as Lord Northcliffe Professor of Modern English Literature in the University of London had much to say about Johnson as a critic, but

we have not seen a copy.

Some recent articles: Edward A. Bloom, "Symbolic Names in Johnson's Periodical Essays" in *MLQ* for Dec. 1952; J.R. Moore, "Conan Doyle, Tennyson, and *Rasselas*" in *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* for December; W. Rees-Mogg, "Pricing a Book" (using the *Lives of the Poets* as a sample) in *The Financial Times* for Jan. 24, 1953 (further references in the issue of January 31); A.D. Atkinson, "A Prospect of Words," *N&Q* for Oct. 11, 1952; Arthur Sherbo, "Dr. Johnson Marks a Book List," *N&Q* for Nov. 22; Peter Cochrane, "Tetty's Tombstone," *Manchester Guardian* for Jan. 5, 1953; Arundell Esdaile, "Boswell Redivivus" (a review of recent publications), *Quarterly Review* for January 1953.

From Geoffrey Beard comes word of the world premiere at Ayr in Scotland of a dramatic fantasy entitled "A Guest of Honor" by Donald Sutherland, the subject being the adventures which befall a mysterious stranger in the company of Boswell and Johnson during the visit to Edinburgh.

Fritz Güttinger in Zurich writes that the German version of Boswell's *London Journal* was selected as the November Book of the Month by the Neue Literarische Welt. Friedrich Sieburg reviewed it extensively in *Die Gegenwart* for November 2. Of a number of famous German authors asked to name their favorite reading of the moment, Nobel Prizewinner Hermann Hesse recommended *Boswell's Londoner Tagebuch* in *Die Weltwoche* for December 12, a weekly which had already devoted a leading article to the Boswell Papers. It is being widely read in German literary circles.

The French translation, very Gallic in appearance and style, has been issued by Hachette in Paris with the title *Les Papiers de Boswell, Amours a Londres, 1762-1763*, and with a Preface by André Maurois. The translation was made by Mme. Blanchet. Danish and Swedish translations have also appeared. Others in Italian and Finnish will follow shortly.

The Defoe Canon

The next volume of the *British Museum Catalogue* (now in press) will base its Defoe entries on the list of J.R. Moore (Indiana). The *Catalogue* will, of course, include only those titles found in the holdings of the British Museum; but Moore's complete list includes 105 new attributions to Defoe and rejects 18 titles attributed by CBEL.

This new list of Defoe's writings is the result of 25 years of examination of most of the books, pamphlets, and periodicals of the period 1681-1731 to be found in the principal libraries of England, Scotland, and the U.S. It has recently been adopted for use in cataloguing the Defoe collections of the following libraries in addition to the British Museum: Bodleian, Boston Public Library, Indiana University, Huntington, William Andrews Clark Memorial.

Of the new attributions, several are due to the researches of C.E. Burch, George Healey, and James Sutherland; some others restore old attributions which have been omitted from recent bibliographies; the great majority are based on entirely fresh evidence. Together with Moore's assignment of *A General History of the Pirates* (included in the CBEL list in 1941) the new list affords perhaps the most significant as well as the largest single correction of the Defoe canon. It will be published in Moore's forthcoming biography of Defoe.

Queries

Miss J.E. Norton (69 Hamilton Terrace, London N.W. 8) is bringing out an edition of the letters of Edward Gibbon. She would appreciate any information concerning Gibbon letters in private possession in the U.S. As she comments: "I have applied to most of the big libraries in America, but there are still some important letters which have passed through the auctions in recent years but which I have been unable to trace further."

Geoffrey W. Beard (Birmingham Reference Library, Birmingham, England) is anxious to find any letters or manuscripts connected with Thomas Warren, the Birmingham printer and bookseller, who brought out Johnson's first published book. If you know of any in private hands or in public libraries please send Beard word.

Dr. Fritz B. Talbot (100 Cottage Farm Rd., Brookline 46, Mass.) is interested in the Bubonic Plague and any echoes of it in literature and the arts. If you have any suggestions send them to him.

Henry Pettit (Colorado) asks about the pronunciation of the name Desmoulins. Mrs. Desmoulins was, you will remember, the daughter of Johnson's Godfather, Dr. Swinfen. We think we know the answer, but won't venture to be dogmatic without better authority. Please send in what evidence you have.

A Request

Like everything else, the cost of printing the JNL has been steadily rising. But we are determined not to raise the subscription price of one dollar. On the other hand, we may be forced to reduce the number of issues a year from five to four. Actually we were unable to get out more than four in 1952.

There is one other way to add to our available resources. We have on hand a quantity of back issues, and can supply a limited number of complete sets for libraries. Perhaps some of you will be willing to see to it that your university library acquires a set of back numbers and in addition becomes a regular subscriber. The prices are 20¢ each for the meagre mimeographed sheets of volumes I and II, and 25¢ each for all numbers in volumes III through XII. A complete set of 60 numbers so far issued (I-XII) would thus cost \$14.40.

If any of you chance to have stray copies of early issues which you do not care to keep, we would also welcome their return. It might be added that by mistake some of you may have received more than one copy of the last number (XII,4). If you did, and still have it, please send back the extra copy.

New Books

We cannot remember a time when there were so many important new books about the 18th century. Indeed, they come in such numbers that we are having trouble finding space in the JNL for anything else.

It is easy to see that Paul Kirby's *The Grand Tour in Italy, 1700-1800* (Vanni) was written *con amore*. He admits as much in his Preface. During the war, as an American soldier, he was stationed in Florence. He fell in love with the country, married an Italian, and has gone back there to live. Evidently he finds very congenial the similar feeling of so many English travelers in the 18th century, and tries to recreate some of the atmosphere of that period. What conditions faced those earlier visitors? What were the best routes? What were the conditions of the roads and accommodations? What did these travelers see, and what were their tastes? From close reading of the old guide books and the published letters and journals of those who made the Grand Tour, Kirby answers these questions. In appendixes he gives detailed time and

post tables, details about currency exchange, and other useful facts. For the general reader it should prove an entertaining and useful book.

Since we are reviewing Maurice Quinlan's new book on Cowper elsewhere we will say here only that we think it by far the best factual life of the author of *The Task* so far produced. Quinlan makes no claim to exhaustive completeness, but he has used new manuscript evidence and has expertly assimilated past scholarship. His portrait is credible, well balanced, and thoroughly reliable. And the University of Minnesota Press has cooperated in producing a very attractive volume, which should be widely read.

For the same reason we cannot give much space to F.H. Dudden's huge two volume life of Fielding (Clarendon). As we have already indicated in print, we think it in many ways a useful work, but we agree with the reviewer in the *FLS* that the need for such a lengthy study is not quite clear, particularly since Dudden has made few important discoveries. How much new he might have found had he searched, cannot be told, but, at least, he missed completely the new facts recently reported by A.B. Shepperson (Univ. of Va.) at the M.L.A. meeting. A much more sensible procedure would have been to have arranged for a new edition of Cross' three volumes, carefully brought up-to-date. So much of the new biography appears to be wasted effort. For example, Dudden gives many pages to the matter of the authorship of *Shamela*, ignoring the fact that Charles Woods (Iowa) had already provided a thoroughly convincing examination of all of the evidence in an article in *Philological Quarterly*. But at least Dudden's volumes are filled with important material, and will give students convenient summaries of most of what Fielding wrote.

A few years ago in *RFS* the discovery was announced of a manuscript miscellany of 18th-century poems, collected and transcribed by Shenstone and later annotated by Bishop Percy. Clearly it was intended for publication, but Shenstone's death in 1763 put a damper on the plans. After various vicissitudes the manuscript finally came to rest in the Alexander Turnbull Library at Wellington, New Zealand, where it was finally identified by Ian A. Gordon. Now at last it is in print (Clarendon Press), admirably edited by Gordon, with the help and encouragement of D. Nichol Smith. As the editor points out, the miscellany was no mere commonplace book. The poems were selected to illustrate Shenstone's theory of poetry, and for that reason the work is historically important. When Shenstone was making the collection almost all of the poems

were unpublished, although even then some were finding their way into contemporary periodicals. In the intervening years many more have been printed, but still some 35 poems by Percy, Lady Luxborough, Graves, and others apparently are now published for the first time. It may be added also that the miscellany throws more light on the part played by Shenstone in editing the *Reliques*.

We have just received from the Clarendon Press a copy of Frederick S. Boas' *An Introduction to Eighteenth-Century Drama, 1700-1780*, but have not had time to examine it carefully. Those who are familiar with Boas' earlier introductions to Tudor and Stuart drama will be able to judge the nature of the work. Designed for students, not for specialists, it gives in simple form information about the leading dramatists of the period from Rowe to Sheridan. Perhaps most useful will be the short discussions of such men as William Rufus Chetwood, Charles Coffey, Isaac Bickerstaffe. The treatment of the major writers is rather cursory.

Hannah More by M.G. Jones of Girton College, Cambridge (Cambridge University Press), concentrates more on Hannah More's contribution to early English educational projects than on her personal life. It is a sober, scholarly investigation, which makes no pretense to psychological analysis of character. She does not probe deeply into her subject's motives. Not so much a biography as a factual account of the career of an important writer of religious tracts, Miss Jones' book is excellent in what it sets out to do.

Donald Davie's *Purity of Diction in English Verse* (Chatto and Windus) is certainly a provocative book. Though very uneven, it will undoubtedly stir up much controversy. Briefly his thesis is that for purity of poetic diction we must go to the mid-18th century, and that it was the Romantics who later were responsible for corrupting it--an apparent reversal of the usual point of view.

We are happy to receive a copy of S.C. Roberts' address *Thomas Gray of Pembroke*, delivered last April at the University of Glasgow (published by Jackson, Glasgow). Here is a delightful account of Gray's life at Cambridge, embodying some new evidence, written with Roberts' customary charm.

Samuel Klinger's *The Goths in England: a Study in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Thought* (Harvard Univ. Press) contains much valuable information. Klinger traces the way the term "Gothic" came into use in the 17th century by defenders of parliament. He shows the close connection in the following century of so-called "Whig aesthetics" with admiration of the Gothic style. There is

an interesting section on the Gothic romances. Throughout, the Goths were symbols of opposition to prerogative, and to them was even attributed the first support of feminism. For any who may still be puzzled about Johnson's aversion to "whiggery" in politics and literature Kliger's new book provides important documentation.

While it is outside our period, we welcome the appearance of R.F. Jones's *The Triumph of the English Language: a Survey of the Opinions Concerning the Vernacular from the Introduction of Printing to the Restoration* (Stanford Univ. Press).

Just arrived is Vol. VIII of the new edition of Swift's prose, *Political Tracts, 1713-1719*, edited by Herbert Davis and Irvin Ehrenpreis (Blackwell). More of this later.

Other new books which should be mentioned are: Derick S. Thomson, *The Gaelic Sources of Macpherson's "Ossian"* (Univ. of Aberdeen); H.C. Cameron, *Sir Joseph Banks* (Batchworth); Alastair Smart, *The Life and Art of Allan Ramsay* (Routledge and Kegan Paul); Richard Pares, *George III and the Politicians* (Oxford Univ. Press); Peter de Polnay, *Death of a Legend: the True Story of Bonny Prince Charlie* (Hamish Hamilton); *The Memoirs of Lord Hervey*, edited by Romney Sedgwick (Kimber); Wolfgang Iser, *Die Weltanschauung Henry Fieldings* (Niemeyer, Tübingen); Hugh MacDonald and Mary Hargreaves, *Thomas Hobbes: a Bibliography* (London, Bibliographical Society); Marjorie Plant, *The Domestic Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh Univ. Press); Lucy S. Sutherland, *The East India Company in 18th Century Politics* (Oxford Univ. Press).

Coming Books

Herbert W. Starr's (Temple) supplement to Northup's *Bibliography of Thomas Gray* will be published by the Temple Univ. Press late this spring or early summer. It will be distributed by the Univ. of Pennsylvania Press. Not only will Starr supply items omitted in Northup's work, but he has extended the bibliography from 1916 through 1951.

Expected during the next few months are: Martin Price, *Swift's Rhetorical Art* (Yale Univ. Press); Russell Kirk, *The Conservative Mind: from Burke to Santayana* (Regnery); D.J. Porritt, *The Duke of Monmouth* (Stockwell); *Locke's Travels in France, 1675-1679*, edited by John Lough (Cambridge Univ. Press);

Michael Joyce, *Edward Gibbon* (Longmans); Peter Smithers, *The Life of Joseph Addison* (Oxford Univ. Press); James Sutherland, *The Oxford Book of English Talk* (Oxford Univ. Press).

Some Recent Articles

There have been a number of discussions of Dryden: Norman Suckling, "Dryden in Egypt: Reflections on *All for Love*," *Durham Univ. Journal* for December 1952; John C. Sherwood, "Dryden and the Rules; the Preface to the Fables," *JEGP*, January 1953 (we might mention also Sherwood's review in *Comparative Literature*, Fall 1952, of F.L. Huntley's book on the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*); Cecil C. Seronsy, "Dryden and Belinda's Toilet," *N&Q*, January, 1953; John Harrington Smith, "Dryden's Prologue and Epilogue to *Mithridates*, Revived," *PMLA* for March. Also to be mentioned is: E.B.O. Borgerhoff, "Boileau Satirist *animi gratia*," in *Romanic Review* for December.

Concerned with Addison and Steele are: Donald Bond, "The Spectator," *Newberry Library Bulletin* for March 1952; John C. Stephens, Jr., "Steele and the Bishop of St. Asaph's Preface," *PMLA*, for December; Richmond P. Bond, "The Business of *The Spectator*", in *Univ. of North Carolina Extension Bulletin* for January 1953; Arthur L. Cooke, "Addison vs. Steele, 1708," *PMLA* for March 1953.

There are quite a number having to do with the Tory wits: Rebecca Price Parkin, "The Quality of Alexander Pope's Humor," *College English*, January 1953; G.W. Beard, "Alexander Pope," *Apollo*, January; Vinton A. Dearing, "Pope, Theobald, and Wycherley's *Posthumous Works*," *PMLA* for March; Robert Halsband, "Pope, Lady Mary, and the *Court Poems*," *PMLA* for March; Edward W. Rosenheim Jr., "A 'Source' for the Rope-Dancing in *Gulliver's Travels*," *PQ* for April 1952; Maurice Johnson, "A Literary Chestnut: Dryden's 'Cousin Swift,'" *PMLA* for December; Sir W. Russell Brain, "The Illness of Dean Swift" (an interesting summing up) in the *Irish Journal of Medical Science* for August; Albert Rosenberg "Prior's Feud with the Duchess of Marlborough," *JEGP* for January 1953 (also contains a further note by H. Bunker Wright).

A highly controversial article which should set your pens to work is Donald J. Greene's "'Logical Structure' in Eighteenth-Century Poetry" in *PQ* for July 1952. Another general approach is Raymond D. Havens, "Simplicity, a Changing Concept," *JHI* for January 1953.

Concerned with the novel are: Ian Watt, "Realism and the Novel," *Essays in Criticism* for October 1952, and "Defoe and Richardson on Homer: a Study of the Relation of Novel and Epic in the Early Eighteenth Century," *RES* for October; Howard O. Brogan, "Fiction and Philosophy in the Education of Tom Jones, Tristram Shandy, and Richard Feverel" in *College English* for December; Lewis M. Knapp, "Fielding's Dinners with Dodginton 1750-1752," *N&Q* for December 20; Benjamin Boyce, "The Question of Emotion in Defoe," *SP* for January 1953.

For Shakespearians there are: George W. Stone Jr., "Shakespeare in the Periodicals, 1700-1740, Part II," *Shakespeare Quarterly* for October 1952; Stuart Tave, "Notes on the Influence of Morgann's Essay on Falstaff," *RES* for October, and "Corbyn Morris: Falstaff, Humor, and the Comic Theory in the Eighteenth Century," *MP* for November.

Also to be listed are: A.R. Humphreys, "Literature and Religion in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* for October; Paul H. Meyer, "The Manuscript of Hume's Account of His Dispute with Rousseau," *Comparative Literature* for Fall 1952; Robert F. Metzdorf, "Isaac Reed and the Unfortunate Dr. Dodd," *Harvard Library Bulletin* for Autumn 1952; Charles H. Bennett, "The Text of Horace Walpole's Correspondence with Hannah More," *RES* for October; D.S. Bland, "Poussin and English Literature," *Cambridge Journal* for November; Everett H. Emerson, "The Date of Isaac Bickerstaff's Death," *N&Q* for November 8; Donald C. Bryant, "Edmund Burke: New Evidence, Broader View," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* for December; G.E. Fussell, "Thomas Potts, 1778-1842; Hackney Writer on Farming, Law and Geography," *N&Q* for December 6; Stuart Tave, "Some Essays by James Beattie in the *London Magazine*," *N&Q* for December 6; James Johnson Sweeney, "Painter Pugg and the Chair Carrier's Calves" [Hogarth], *Partisan Review* for Jan.-Feb. 1953; G.W. Beard, "A Painting by an Author" [Shenstone?], *Country Life*, January 23, 1953.

For bibliographers there are W.B. Todd, "Unauthorized Readings in the First Edition of Thomson's *Coriolanus*," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, First Quarter 1952; and four short papers in *Studies in Bibliography* (1952-53); Arthur Friedman, "The First Edition of *Essays by Mr. Goldsmith*, 1765"; Jeanne Addison Masengill, "Variant Forms of Fielding's *Coffee-House Politician*"; Allen T. Hazen, "Baskerville and James Whatman"; Robert R. Rea, "Some Notes on Edward Gibbon's *Mémoire Justificatif*."